

What Christ said about the End Times

Matthew 25

Matthew 25:1-13 is another warning **parable** told by Jesus. The parable of the ten virgins is telling us two things: 1) we do not know when **Jesus** will come back, 2) but we are to be **prepared** when he does come back.

The setting for this parable was a typical Jewish wedding ceremony. It should be noted that a wedding was the most celebrated social event in those days in a village.

A Jewish wedding consisted of three parts:

- 1) The **engagement** was usually done by the fathers and was more or less a contract.
- 2) The **betrothal** is where the bride and groom exchange vows in front of friends and family. This relationship could only be broken by divorce. Even though the wedding had not been consummated and the couple did not live together. If the husband would die during this time the wife would be considered a **widow**. This part of the wedding could last for many months.
- 3) At the end of the betrothal the wedding feast would take place. At this time the whole community was involved and this celebration could last up to a week in length.
 - a) The ceremony started when the groom would come to the bride's house along with the groomsmen.
 - b) The bride and her bridesmaids were waiting and when the **groom** and his men would meet the **bride** and her attendants they would parade through the town letting everyone know the wedding feast was about to **start**.

This wedding feast **parade** would happen at **night** and lamps and torches were used by the wedding party to light their way and to attract attention to the event.

At the end of the feast, a close **friend** of the groom- who was what we would consider the best man, would take the **bride's hand** and place it in the groom's hand and then the couple would be left alone to consummate the wedding and the groom and the bride would live together in their home.

Verse 7

"Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps."

Then- refers to the time that **Christ** will appear and it will be unexpected as he has been talking about.

Entrance into the Kingdom of heaven will be **comparable** to the preparedness of the ten virgins who served as bridesmaids at a wedding.

Ten virgins- there might be **meaning** behind ten virgins. Ten to the Jewish people was a number which represents **completeness**. The historian Josephus tells us that a minimum of ten men were needed to celebrate Passover. The same number was needed to start a synagogue and to give an official wedding blessing. The attendants were virgins because it was the custom of the day that bridesmaids be chaste young women who had never been married.

Lamps-this Greek word was used to describe torches. In addition to giving light it also **identified** members of the wedding party.

To meet- this word in the Greek means **"a meeting"** and was often used for the official welcoming of a dignitary.

The bridegroom- is **Jesus**.

The bridesmaids- represent **professed** followers of Christ. Their outward **appearance** was all the same. Only five of them had oil for their lamp. The other five had a **profession** of faith but without a saving relationship with Christ (James 2:17; 2 Timothy 3:5).

This **warning** that Jesus gives is seen over and over in the Gospels- (wheat and tares, different soils, etc).

The bridesmaids falling asleep- this illustrates two things:

- 1) It will be a **long** time until Christ returns.
- 2) No one **knows** when he will come back.

The rest of the parable illustrates that there will not be a **second chance**. This reminds us of Noah's days when they shut the door on the ark.

(seeing this in Branson, the door shutting and people pounding on the door)

Verses 14-30: The parable of the talents

These two parables found in chapter 25 go together. The first parable is about **waiting** for the Lord's return, being prepared. This parable is about being ready but also **working** as we wait. This is a balance we must be about as we wait for the Lord.

In the book of 2 Thessalonians there were believers who thought Jesus was coming back soon so they stopped working and became knuckleheads. Paul addresses them in 2Thessalonians 3:10-13.

Verse 14

"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property.

The man- is **Jesus** and this journey would take time again. Another hint that Jesus would not be back soon.

The servants- would be his **followers**

Verse 15

To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

The talents **represent** a wide range of responsibilities. In other words, he was showing the **responsibility** that every believer has to use the gifts and opportunities that Christ has given them.

Verse 16

He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more.

The first servant received 5 talents and went out and traded them and received 5 more. It should be understood that this slave just did not make a one-time investment but kept **trading** and **working** at this and doubled the Lord's investment. This man represents a true **believer** who loved his Lord and was all about serving his Lord.

Verse 17

So also he who had the two talents made two talents more.

The second slave got less from his master but he turned it around and doubled the investment. Again showing **commitment** to his master.

Verse 18

But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

The third slave did not **invest**; rather he took his talent and buried it and protected it. It should be noted that this was common practice back in the day because they did not have banks. He did not invest his talent.

Verses 19-23

Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' 21His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' 22And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' 23His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

There will be delay before Jesus comes back and one day there will be a **reckoning**; a settling of accounts if you will. 2 Corinthians 5:10

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

The first two servants were commended and promoted. What Jesus is telling us is that if believers take advantage of the **opportunities** they are given for the Lord they will be **rewarded**.

Verses 24-25

He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.'

This is faulty reasoning and blaming the Lord for **holding** him accountable.

Verses 26-27

But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.'

The motivation for this last servant is **self-centered** and the Lord was not at all pleased with this servant who wasted his opportunity.

Verses 28-30

So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The third servant was not a **believer**. A true believer will have his works burned up but he still will be saved. 1 Corinthians 3:15

"If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire".

This servant was called *worthless* and cast into outer darkness where there will be *weeping and gnashing of teeth*, which describes **Hell**.

The judgment of the nations at Christ's second coming (Verses 31-46)

Verse 31

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

The judge- John 5:22 makes it clear that **Jesus** will be the judge. The Son of man was a title that Jesus used of himself many times and refers to his **incarnation** and his **identity** with mankind.

The date- We do not know what time in history this will occur, but we do know that he will appear at the end of the tribulation.

Daniel tells us that there will be a total of **75 days** from the time of Christ's second coming and the start of His kingdom (Daniel 12:11-12). It would appear that it takes **75 days** to create the valley talked about in Zechariah 14:4-5 and the judgment.

Angels will be with him and also the **saints** of the Old Testament, as well as the ones **raptured** and the ones who were **martyred** during the tribulation (Colossians 3:4).

Verse 32

Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

All nations represent all people who are alive at that time and this will include both saved and unsaved people represented by sheep and goats.

Verses 33-34

And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Believers who survive the tribulation will then go into the **Millennium**. The saints from all ages will reign with Christ (Revelation 20:4).

Verses 35-40

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was

in prison and you came to me.’ 37Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ 40And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

These good deeds that the saved did during the tribulation was the **fruit**- not the root- of their **salvation**. The believers will take care of **others** and also take care of the **Israelites**, my Brethren.

Verses 41-46

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ 44Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ 45Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ 46And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The lost will be gathered on his left and they will show the state of their heart by the way they treated other people and especially the **Jewish** believers (Genesis 12:3; Numbers 24:8-9). These people will have their **day** in court at the Great White throne judgment (Revelation 20:11).

In the meantime, they will go to **hell** awaiting their **final judgment** which will occur after the 1000-year reign of Christ.